

**A NEW SPECIES OF *RHYNCHOSPORA* (CYPERACEAE)  
FROM VENEZUELA**

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According to Koyama's treatment of the Rhynchosporae for the Botany of the Guyana Highland (1972), over 86 species of *Rhynchospora* are known from Venezuela. Despite Koyama's important contribution to our knowledge of Venezuelan *Rhynchospora* there still exist species to be described.

Because of its capitate inflorescence, white spikelet scales, and lack of hypogynous bristles, *Rhynchospora chimantensis* at first appears to be a new species of section *Dichromena*. However, it has several features uncharacteristic of section *Dichromena* which are found in section *Pseudocapitatae* (Kükenthal, 1949): achenes 1-2 per spikelet, basal spikelet scales smaller than those more distal, relatively loosely aggregated spikelets in fascicles, and achene surfaces which are only lightly rugulose. For these reasons, I did not include this species in my recent revision of *Rhynchospora* section *Dichromena* (Thomas, 1982) but consider it allied to section *Pseudocapitatae*.

***Rhynchospora chimantensis*** Thomas, sp. nov.

Fig. 1.

Cespitose perennial; culms erect to arching, to 60 cm tall, 1.1-1.3 mm wide basally, 0.8-0.9 mm wide distally, obtusely triquetrous, glabrous, green; leaves 3-5, 1-2 cauline, green to greyish-green; leaf blades 5-30 cm long, 1.5-3 mm wide, flat to conduplicate, lateral veins  $\pm$  prominent, sparsely villous or glabrous adaxially except for the villous midrib, villous abaxially; margins villous; leaf sheath 3-5 cm long, villous; inner band whitish, chartaceous, densely short-villous, its summit truncate to concave; inflorescence bracts 1-3, green to greyish-green, flat to conduplicate, midrib prominent, base whitish; basal bract longest, 4.2-6 cm long, 1.6-1.9 mm wide, linear, white along basal 3.5-6 mm and an extension along midrib, sparsely pilose, more densely so along adaxial midrib; inflorescence congested, globose, head-like, with 24-38 fascicled spikelets with basal peduncles occasionally to 3 mm long; spikelets ovoid to lanceoloid, 4-7 mm long, 0.8-1.3 mm wide, with ca. 9-10 scales; scales ovate, ca. 5 mm long, ca. 1.8 mm wide, smaller towards base of spikelet, cymbiform, distal  $\frac{1}{3}$  carinate, white to pinkish, lightly and finely streaked with reddish brown basally; stamens 3; filaments 2.9-3.3 mm long; anthers 2-2.1 mm long; stigma and style 3.1-3.6 mm long; stigma branches 2.3-2.6 mm long; achene lenticular, usually bilaterally symmetrical, ellipsoid, yellowish or beige darkening to light reddish-brown at base, 1.1-1.3 mm long, 0.7-0.9 mm wide; edges of style base confluent with margins of achene; style base persistent, triangular, 0.6-1 mm long, 0.6-0.7 mm wide, brown; summit of achene horizontal; achene surface transversely rugulose, often indistinctly so; epidermal cells narrowly elliptic, often indistinct.

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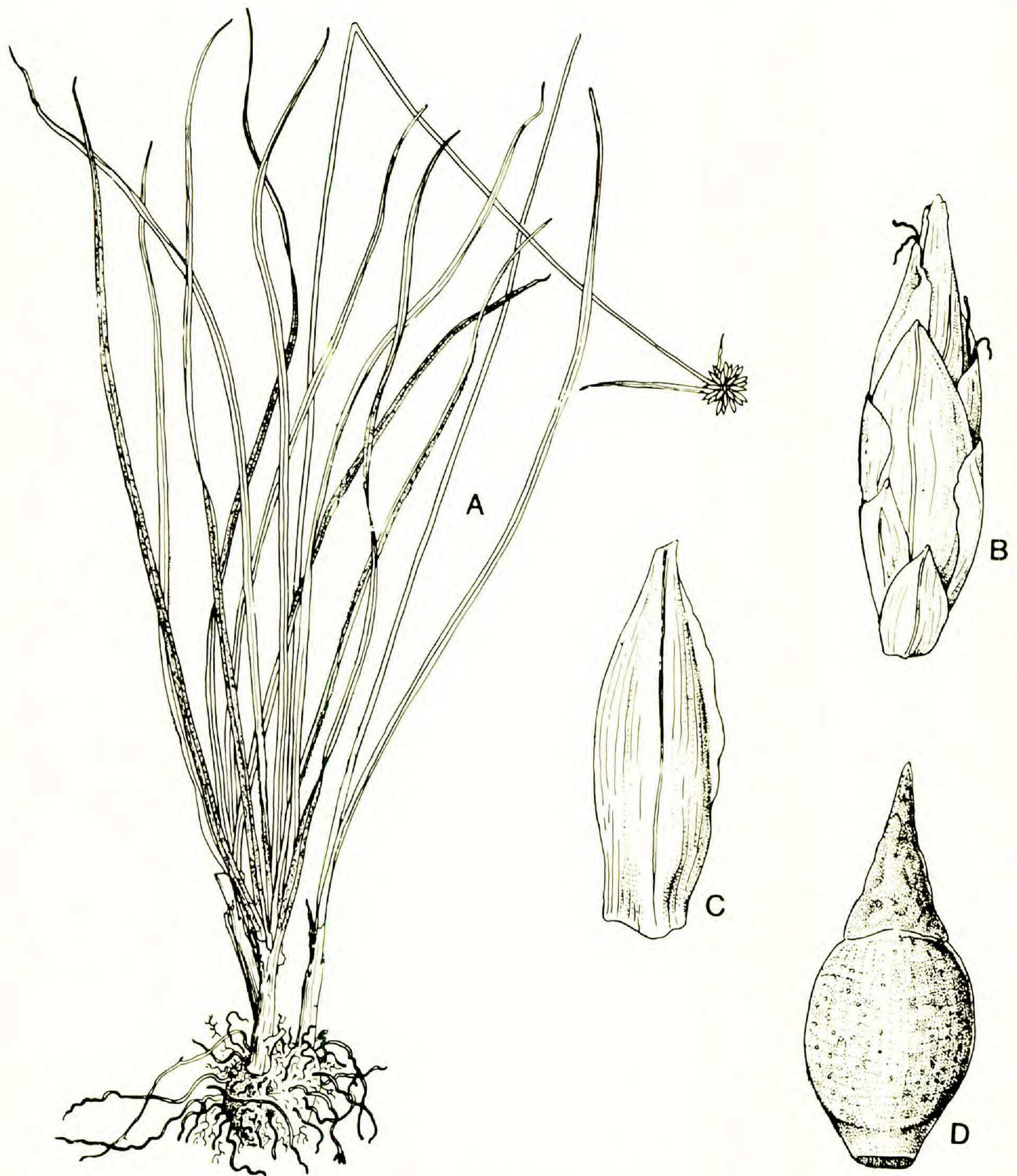


FIG. 1. *Rhynchospora chimantensis*. A. Whole plant, culm 60 cm tall; B. Spikelet, 5 mm long; C. Spikelet scale, 4 mm long; D. Achene, 1.8 mm long (Steyermark & Wurdack 362 (NY)).

Planta caespitosa, perennis; culmi erectiusculi vel arcuati, usque ad 60 cm alti; foliorum laminae 5–30 cm longae, adaxialiter glabrae vel villosae, abaxialiter villosae; laminarum costae villosae; inflorescentia laxe congesta, globosa; spiculae 24–38, ovate vel lanceolate, 4–7 mm longae, 0.8–1.3 mm latae, 1–2 achaeniis; achaenium lenticulare, ellipsoideum, 1.1–1.3 mm longum, 0.7–0.9 mm latum; achaenii testa leviter transverse rugulosa.

VENEZUELA: BOLIVAR: Chimantá Massif, Central Section, scrub forest near Summit Camp, rare on dry sandy banks bordering river, heads gray-white, 1925 m, 2 Feb. 1955, Steyermark & Wurdack 362 (F, holotype; MO, NY isotypes).

Although this species is known from only one collection, it is quite possible that it occurs on other tepui mountains as well as on Chimantá. *R. chimantensis* is characterized by its height, narrow leaves, green bracts with pilose midribs, the loosely congested head of spikelets, the ellipsoid achenes, and the long style

bases. Despite having seen only one collection (3 sheets), I feel that there is little possibility of this being simply an extreme variant of a previously described taxon.

#### ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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